

Attachment 4.11(d) – State Strategies and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities

DVR adopts the following strategies to address needs assessment findings and State Plan goals and priorities.

- A. DVR's **Goal 1** is to provide timely, individualized services to DVR customers that result in employment outcomes that meet the customer's needs.

The following strategies support improving DVR's performance on standards and indicators 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6 and 2.1.

- DVR will improve self-employment outcomes through implementation of revised self-employment guidelines and procedures, statewide training for staff and securing access to additional resources, support and expertise in small business development and operation. (1.1, 1.2)
- DVR will increase its ability to assist customers gain access to apprenticeships through improving staff knowledge about apprenticeships available through local employers, qualifying criteria, and application processes and establish a referral process for DVR customers. (1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6)
- DVR will broaden the population of individuals with disabilities being served by DVR through outreach to increase the representation of underserved or unserved populations. Outreach, education, and marketing efforts will be targeted to individuals with disabilities who are already working to retain or progress in employment, previous DVR customers who may have lost employment to become reemployed, college students nearing completion of their academic programs and other groups who are identified as underserved. (1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6)
- DVR will develop and pilot a service delivery model that offers scheduling options and procedural methods that accommodate customers who can and need to progress through the VR process and into employment more quickly. The pilot will target individuals with transferrable job skills who need VR services to enter higher wage job with benefits. This pilot project will be implemented with the use of the ARRA stimulus funds. (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6)
- A full-time Assistive Technology Assessment Practitioner (ATAP) is available in each of DVR's three geographic Areas to provide AT assessment, consultation and support to Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors statewide in

the provision of vocational rehabilitation services. This expertise and support is provided, based on the identification of assistive technology needs resulting from a standardized assessment at the time of eligibility or based on information obtained throughout the rehabilitation process. (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4)

- DVR uses foreign and sign language translation and interpreter services available on contract to communicate with individuals who are limited English speaking. DVR has a Statewide Administrator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing as well as regional counselors for the deaf throughout the state to ensure access to services for the deaf and hard of hearing population. (1.1, 1.2, 2.1)

B. DVR's **Goal 2** is to strengthen DVR's workforce and improve its overall organizational systems.

The following strategies support improving DVR's performance on standards and indicators 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6 and 2.1.

- DVR will continue to enhance staff counseling skills by providing training to staff at all levels in the agency in Motivational Interviewing (MI). (1.1, 1.2)
- DVR will develop and implement Advanced Best Practices training designed to provide instruction related to effective approaches to case management and service delivery for VRCs. (1.1, 1.2, 1.4)
- DVR will hire a Supported Employment in State Government Program Manager to coordinate programs and activities designed to effectively place customers that require long term supported employment services in government positions. (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6)
- DVR will target recruitment efforts to increase the ethnic and cultural diversity of qualified DVR applicants as stated in the DVR Diversity Plan outlined in Attachment 4.11(c)(1). Key positions throughout DVR are designated as requiring specific language competencies (including foreign and sign languages) to meet the needs of the local population. (1.1, 1.2, 2.1)
- DVR will adopt ongoing staff recognition and appreciation practices throughout the agency. (1.1, 1.2)
- DVR will develop opportunities for staff interested in advancement that address succession planning, such as mentoring, coaching, support and networking activities. (1.1, 1.2)
- DVR will support supervisors to promote accountability by providing intensive support to staff who need to develop or improve counseling skills to achieve qualitative case measures or productivity standards. (1.1, 1.2)

- DVR will provide supervisors with the time and tools needed to deliver effective, ongoing coaching and mentoring for their staff. (1.1, 1.2)
- DVR will transition the current case management system information technology system from an outdated programming language to .NET.
- DVR will implement the Learning Management System for all personnel to better track the training needs and training records of DVR staff.
- DVR will increase its capacity and use of technology for communicating; i.e., teleconferencing, videoconferencing, etc.

C. DVR's **Goal 3** is to distinguish DVR's role in the disability community and leverage partnerships to maximize resources and support for individuals with disabilities.

The following strategies support improving DVR's performance on standards and indicators 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6 and 2.1.

- DVR will participate in local community organizations and events, including organizations representing diverse ethnic and disability populations, for the purpose of outreach, education and partnership building. (2.1)
- DVR will provide educational and marketing information in accessible formats and/or conduct outreach to organizations throughout communities that serve populations who might benefit from DVR services. (1.1, 1.2)
- DVR will continue to partner with WorkSource to improve and expand the services available to individuals with disabilities.(1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6)
- DVR will partner with the WSRC and local disability service organizations to educate and inform legislators about services and outcomes of VR and other programs. (1.1)
- DVR will improve its knowledge and use of labor market and high-demand occupation information as well as its education and training capacity to ensure the number of customers trained in an industry matches the number of expected job openings. (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6)
- DVR will contract with tribal programs to assist the agency in providing culturally competent, reservation-based services to common customers. (1.1, 2.1)

D. DVR's **Goal 4** is to increase outreach to improve and strengthen DVR's connection and relationship with employers.

The following strategies support improving DVR's performance on standards and indicators 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6 and 2.1.

- Conduct outreach to potential employers to increase awareness and educate them about the potential benefits of employing individuals with disabilities and partnering with DVR. (1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 2.1)
- Outreach and marketing within DSHS and other state agencies related to supported employment, internships and competitive employment in state government. (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6)
- Create and maintain a DVR employer network with strategies and incentives to grow. (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6)
- Develop and focus the efforts of a statewide DVR employment services team on increasing employer awareness, building on our partnerships with Work Source Centers and internal job development staff. (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 2.1)

E. DVR intends to develop Innovation and Expansion projects in the following areas:

- Implement an initiative that focuses on government as a model employer, including supported employment in government positions, competitive employment opportunities, trial work sites, internships and mentoring opportunities.
- Work with the mental health system to develop peer support positions that provide ongoing long term employment support for individuals with mental illness.
- Collaborate with partners in Project SEARCH to create a statewide model for implementation and funding structure. DVR will use innovation and expansion to support the creation of projects that reflect strong employer support, partnership among key agencies and high quality employment opportunities for DVR clients.
- Collaborate with Centers for Independent Living interested in developing skills and capacity to provide support services, such as benefits planning, IL evaluations and services, budgeting and money management for DVR clients.
- Collaborate with the Washington Business Leadership Network to expand business relations and partnerships for internships and placements.

- Collaborate with the Washington Initiative for Supported Employment (WISE) and O'Neill & Associates to build capacity for increasing the skills of employment service providers.